

# City of Marietta Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan 2010-2020



Prepared for  
**Marietta Parks and  
Recreation Department**

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# **City of Marietta**

## **Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan 2010-2020**

***Adopted, April 14, 2010***



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**Mission Statement:**

The Goal of the Marietta Parks and Recreation Department is to provide safe, enjoyable recreation and leisure opportunities for our diverse population, to preserve and beautify our parks and green areas and to promote environmental awareness.



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Once adopted, the Citywide Parks & Facilities Master Plan will function as the City of Marietta's system-wide recreation plan for the ten-year period beginning in 2010. Furthermore, it will become the Recreation section of the Community Facilities Element of the City of Marietta Comprehensive Plan 2006 – 2030.

### 1.1 WHAT IS A SYSTEM-WIDE RECREATION MASTER PLAN?

A system-wide recreation master plan is a reflection of the city's objectives, needs and priorities for the provision of leisure space, facilities, and programs. As such, it serves as a guide for the formulation of local policy and the decision-making process while addressing the quality and location of recreational opportunities necessary to meet the needs of present and future residents of the City of Marietta.

The functional objective of a system-wide recreation master plan is to achieve a balance between the benefits and effectiveness of providing parks, facilities and programs and the costs and efficiency of their development and operation. This is accomplished by involving all stakeholders – residents of the City of Marietta (users), professional staff from the Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department (PRFD), representatives of the Marietta City School Board, the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Committee, appropriate private sector stakeholders and elected city officials.

The system-wide recreation master plan then translates community needs and demand for parks, facilities and programs into recommendations that can realistically be implemented within a given planning period. The timeframe covered by this Plan is the period 2010-2020. The Plan addresses both the active and passive recreational needs of the city, includes recommendations for land acquisition; improvements to existing recreation sites; development of new parks and facilities; and, greenways, trails and linkages. NOTE: The City Club, Marietta is included in the facilities inventory and overall acreage but there are no recommendations for future capital improvements in the Plan.

## 2.0 MODIFIED NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The intent of a modified needs assessment is to first determine the adequacy of system-wide acreage and facilities, and to develop "Marietta-specific" standards for the recreation system to identify present and future needs for additional park acreage and for active and passive recreation facilities. This is accomplished by examining present standards in use together with participation data, resulting in standards and criteria that are appropriate to the City of Marietta. These are then applied to the design populations developed in the community profile section of this document.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has advanced general guidelines for both system-wide recreational acreage and facilities that can be utilized as baseline criteria for developing Marietta standards. These NRPA standards are not intended to be representative of all municipalities, and NRPA does caution against universal application, due to user demand varying from place to place nationwide.



The Marietta modified needs assessment utilizes NRPA guidelines as a baseline and adjusts these standards to reflect actual park and facilities utilization, user participation rates, and perceived demand as expressed throughout the input process. The resultant standards for acreage and facilities used in the modified needs assessment are therefore “Marietta - specific” and should be responsive to meeting recreation needs throughout the ten-year planning period.

### **2.1.1 RECREATIONAL PLANNING CRITERIA FOR THE CITY OF MARIETTA**

Acreage and facility standards are developed as part of performing the needs assessment. As part of the needs assessment process, the following recreational planning criteria are established for the Marietta recreation system:

- The recreation system should be people-oriented, reflecting to the extent possible both demand and desires of system users for both active and passive facilities.
- Recommendations must take into consideration the lack of available recreation land, while focusing on redevelopment activities as a source of new parkland.
- Plan recommendations need to reflect long-term growth within the city and provide adequate geographic coverage of present and future populations.
- Recommendations made in the Plan must be feasible and cost-effective.

### **2.1.2 PARKLAND ACREAGE STANDARDS**

System-wide acreage planning standards are typically used as guidelines to determine the amount of parkland necessary to meet present and future recreation demand. The NRPA local close-to-home space guidelines recommend a community endeavor to provide between 6.25 to 10.50 acres per 1,000 persons. In addition, the standard for linear parks is presently 0.16 miles per 1,000 persons.

The City of Marietta presently has a total of 421.26 acres of local close-to-home space (including the City Club golf course and those Cobb County parks that are located within the corporate limits, and a 2007 population of 60,758, or 6.71 acres per 1,000 persons.

Using the standard for local close-to-home space listed above as a benchmark, "Marietta - specific" system-wide planning guidelines were developed. The criteria that influenced the development of these guidelines were:

- Stakeholder input received as result of public informational meetings
- Tabulation of website and telephone surveys
- Results of stakeholder interviews





- The small group workshop
- Program participation trends
- Population forecasts and geographic distribution of the population

With the Marietta population anticipated to increase by approximately 8.1 percent by the year 2015, and by an additional 7.4 percent between the years 2015 and 2020, the PRFD has adopted the standard of 6.25 acres per 1,000 persons for parkland. It is their intention to acquire land over the ten-year planning period such that by the year 2020 the acreage deficit will be erased. Table 2-1 depicts the system-wide acreage needed to meet this standard.

**Table 2-1 System-Wide Parkland Needs City of Marietta 2010, 2015 and 2020**

YEAR	POPULATION	STANDARD	ACRES REQUIRED	DEFICIT (SURPLUS)
2010	62,000	6.25 Ac./1,000 Persons	388	(7)Ac.
2015	67,000	6.25 Ac./1,000 Persons	419	4 Ac.
2020	72,000	6.25 Ac./1,000 Persons	450	29 Ac.

Note: The city's supply of 421.26 acres includes two Cobb County parks (Larry Bell Park and Fair Oaks Park) that are located within the corporate limits and available for use by city residents, dedicated greenspace, and the 108-acre City Club golf course that is also available for public use.

With a total system-wide acreage of 421.26 acres, and using the standards shown in Table 2-1, the City of Marietta has a present surplus of twenty acres, and will need to provide four additional acres by the year 2015 and 29 additional acres by close of the planning period in the year 2020.

While the projected acreage deficits appear to be low, it is worth noting that a significant portion of the city's existing parkland consists of lands that are passive (A. L. Burruss Park and Wildwood Park – 74 acres), land that is permanent greenspace (42.67 acres), and land (108 acres) occupied by a golf course used by an estimated 10 percent of the city's residents.

### **2.1.3 FACILITIES PLANNING STANDARDS**

Standards governing the provision of specific recreation facilities were developed to address both active and passive recreational facilities. These standards are based upon the potential level of service for particular types of facilities, including ball fields, multi-purpose fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, indoor space etc. Table 2-2 provides a comparison between NRPA facility standards, "Marietta - specific" facilities standards, and the present level of service for each type of facility in the City of Marietta, based upon the current population and number of facilities inventoried.



**Table 2-2 Facilities Standards Comparison and Current Level of Service City of Marietta**

FACILITY TYPE	NRPA GUIDELINE	MARIETTA GUIDELINE	2010 INVENTORY	2010 INVENTORY INCL. COBB CO. PARKS
Ball Fields	1 Per 5,000	1 Per 8,000	3 – 1 Per 20,300	11 – 1 Per 5,500
Soccer Fields	1 Per 10,000	1 Per 7,000	1 – 1 Per 61,000	4 – 1 Per 15,300
Football Fields	1 Per 20,000	1 Per 20,000	2 – 1 Per 30,500	2 – 1 Per 30,500
Multi-Purpose Fields	No Guideline	1 Per 20,000	1 – 1 Per 61,000	2 – 1 Per 30,500
Grassed Playfields	No Guideline	1 Per 10+ Ac. Park	4 – 1 Per 15,300	4 – 1 Per 15,300
Tennis Courts	1 Per 2,000	1 Per 1,750	19 – 1 Per 3,200	35 – 1 Per 1,700
Basketball Courts (Outdoor)	1 Per 5,000	1 Per 20,000	3 – 1 Per 20,300	3 – 1 Per 20,300
Volleyball Courts (Outdoor)	1 Per 5,000	1 Per 10,000	2 – 1 Per 30,500	2 – 1 Per 30,500
Running Tracks	1 Per 20,000	1 Per 30,000	1 – 1 Per 61,000	2 – 1 Per 30,500
Swimming Pools	1 Per 20,000	1 Per 50,000	1 – 1 Per 61,000	2 – 1 Per 30,500
Playgrounds	No Guideline	1 Per 4,000	14 – 1 Per 4,400	17 – 1 Per 3,600
Pavilions	No Guideline	1 Per 4,000	13 – 1 Per 4,700	17 – 1 Per 3,600
Park Trails	No Guideline	1 Per 10+ Ac. Park	8 – 1 Per 2.5 Parks	8 – 1 Per 3 Parks
Multi-Purpose Trails	1 Per City	1 Per City	Under Development	Under Development
Nature/Interpretive Trail	No Guideline	1 Per Passive Park	1 – 0.5 Per Passive Park	1 – 0.5 Per Passive Park
Recreation Centers	No Guideline	1 Per 35,000	2 – 1 Per 30,500	3 – 1 Per 20,300
Community Centers	No Guideline	1 Per 35,000	0 – 0 Per 61,000	0 – 0 Per 61,000
Cultural Arts Center	No Guideline	1 Complex Per City	0 – 0 Per 61,000	1 – 1 Per 61,000
Concessions/RR Buildings	No Guideline	1 Per 4 Fields + 1 Per 10+ Ac. Park	1 – 1 Per 7 Fields	4 – 1 Per 5 Fields
Maintenance Facilities	No Guideline	1 Per Community Or Larger Park	1 – 1 Per System	2 – 2 Per System
Parking (Athletic Fields)	50/Athletic Field	75/ Athletic Field	N/A	N/A

#### **2.1.4 COMPARISON OF FACILITIES PLANNING STANDARDS**

While no two cities have exactly the same demand for recreational facilities, it is of interest to compare the facilities standards developed for the City of Marietta with those of neighboring cities. Table 2-3 provides a comparison of the facilities planning standards for Marietta with those presently being used by the cities of Roswell, Alpharetta, Smyrna, Kennesaw and Sandy Springs, has some similar demographic characteristics to those of Marietta.



**Table 2-3 Comparison of Facilities Planning Standards**

FACILITY TYPE	MARIETTA	KENNESAW	ROSWELL	ALPHARETTA	SMYRNA	SANDY SPRINGS
Ball Fields	1/8,000	1/ 2,500	1/ 2,000	1/ 2,000	1/3,500	1/8,000
Soccer Fields	1/7,000	1/8,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/12,000
Football Fields	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/5,000	1/30,000	1/40,000
Multi-Purpose Fields	1/20,000	1/25,000	None	None	1/10,000	1/40,000
Tennis Courts	1/1,750	1/3,000	1/ 2,000	1/ 2,000	1/ 2,000	1/2,500
Basketball Courts (Outdoor)	1/20,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/2,000	1/10,000	1/20,000
Volleyball Courts (Outdoor)	1/10,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/8,000	1/10,000	1/20,000
Running Tracks	1/30,000	1/30,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/40,000	1/60,000
Swimming Pools	1/50,000	1/30,000	1/50,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/30,000
Playgrounds	1/4,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/ 4,000	1/ 4,000	Varies
Pavilions	1/4,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/3,000	1/ 4,000	Varies
Multi-Purpose Trails	1/City	1/City	1/City	1/20,000	1/City	1/City
Nature/Interpretive Trails	1/Passive Park	1/Passive Park	1/Passive Park	None	None	1/Passive Park
Recreation Centers	1/35,000	1/25,000	2.5 sq.ft/. Person	2.5 sq.ft/. Person	1/20,000	1/30,000
Community Centers	1/35,000	1/25,000	None	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/Community Park
Cultural Arts Center	1/City	1/10,000	None	None	None	1/City
Concessions/RR Buildings	1/4 Fields + 1/10+ Ac. Park	1 /4 Fields	1/ 2.5 Fields	3/Reg. Park, 2/Comm. Park	1/4 Fields	1/4 Fields
Maintenance Facilities	1 Per Comm. Or Larger Park	1/Comm. Park	1/Dist. Park	None	1/Comm. Park	1/Comm. Or Larger Park
Parking (Athletic Fields)	75/Field	65/Field	65/Field	None	None	75/Field

Source: Recreation Plans For Kennesaw, Roswell, Alpharetta, Smyrna and Sandy Springs Prepared By Robert G. Betz AICP, Inc.

## Facilities Needs

The "Marietta – specific" facility standards as established in Table 2-2 were applied to the year 2010, 2015 and year 2020 design populations to determine present and future facilities needs. These needs are identified in Table 2-4.

**Table 2-4 Facilities Needs 2010, 2015, And 2020 City of Marietta**

FACILITY TYPE	2010 SUPPLY*	2010 NEED*	2015 NEED*	2020 NEED*
	M/C/T	T/D/N	T/D/N	T/D/N
Ball Fields	5/9/14	14/8/0	14/8/0	14/9/0
Soccer Fields	1/3/4	4/9/5	4/10/6	4/10/6
Football Fields	2/0/2	2/3/1	2/3/1	2/4/2
Multi-Purpose Fields	1/2/3	3/3/0	3/3/0	3/4/1
Grassed Playfields	4/0/4	4/4/0	4/5/1	4/6/2
Tennis Courts	19/16/35	35/35/0	35/38/3	35/41/6
Basketball Courts (Outdoor)	3/0/3	3/3/0	3/3/0	3/4/1
Volleyball Courts (Outdoor)	1/0/1	1/6/5	1/6/5	1/7/6
Running Tracks	1/2/3	3/2/0	3/2/0	3/2/0
Swimming Pools	1/2/3	3/1/0	3/1/0	3/1/0
Playgrounds	14/3/17	17/16/0	17/17/0	17/19/2
Pavilions	13/17/30	30/16/0	30/17/0	30/19/0
Multi-Purpose Trails	1/0/1	1/1/0	1/1/0	1/1/0
Nature/Interpretive Trails	1/0/1	1/2/1	1/2/1	1/2/1
Recreation Centers	2/1/3	3/1/0	3/2/0	3/2/0
Community Centers	0/0/0	0/2/2	0/2/2	0/2/2
Cultural Arts Centers	0/0/0	0/1/1	1/1/1	1/1/1
Concessions/Restroom Bldgs.	1/4/5	5/13/8	5/13/8	5/13/8
Maintenance Facilities	2/2/4	4/6/2	4/7/3	4/8/4
Parking (Athletic Fields)	N/A	1,350	1,500	1,950

\* M – Marietta, C – Cobb County, T – Total, D – Demand, N – Need..

### 2.1.5 ADDITIONAL FACILITIES NEEDS

The public informational meetings, surveys, stakeholder interviews and the small group workshop results identified a desire for some facilities not presently available to Marietta recreation system users. These include: a skate park, all-inclusive recreation centers, community centers, dog parks, trail linkages, and renovations to existing facilities where needed.

### 2.1.6 ADDITIONAL PROGRAM NEEDS

Based upon input received, it is anticipated that during the ten years covered by this Plan additional program offerings will be necessary to meet user demand. Those mentioned most frequently include: active programs for seniors, family-oriented programs, swimming, physical fitness, after school programs, tutoring, and additional camping programs.





### 3.0 RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS TO PARKS

The recommendations section of the Plan contains the overall vision for the recreation system through the year 2020. The vision consists of specific, attainable goals coupled with measurable objectives. Recommendations are made for land acquisition, improvements and/or retrofitting of existing parks and facilities, for new parks, and the incorporation of trails and linkages between parks and local activity centers.

#### 3.1 VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The development of general goals, together with measurable objectives is an important part of the recreation planning process. Goal development that takes into consideration an overall vision, public input, present demand, and forecast user demand provides a rationale for measuring progress toward Plan implementation. Goals are an expression of the City of Marietta's desire to address the needs and demands for recreational opportunities and program and service delivery.

To facilitate an understanding as to the relationship of goals and objectives to the recreation planning process and Plan implementation, the following definitions are provided:

- Goal – A goal is an end result or a desirable condition. It expresses wishes and values, provides direction, and has the support of Marietta residents and city officials.
- Objective – An objective is an identifiable task which, when attained, contributes to achievement of a goal. Objects should, therefore, consist of measurable actions.

In developing goals and objectives, the principle of "less is more" is a sound guideline. It is typical for planning studies to include multiple goals and objectives, resulting in the inability of implementing agencies to accomplish their intent during the planning period. In this Plan, six general goals are identified, together with specific measurable objectives for each. Each goal is realistic and can readily be accomplished within the ten-year planning period covered by this Plan.

##### 3.1.1 THE "MARIETTA VISION"

In early 2007, the Mayor and City Council met to revise the goals for the Marietta community. The result was the "Marietta Vision", which consists of eight statements that together constitute a roadmap for the city's future. Four of these statements address aspects of the recreation system. The following are taken from the vision statements and are incorporated into the goals and objectives advanced in this Plan.



- The city will strive for compliance with the greenspace ordinances that contain requirements for tree-save plans, including new residential construction.
- Revitalization of our current parks and the establishment of new parks to accommodate active and passive use are encouraged.
- Completion of the Chattahoochee River to Kennesaw Avenue Trail segment through Marietta should be accomplished by 2013.
- Citizen input is to be accomplished through community wide meetings and should be an active part of the planning process.

### **3.1.2 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The goals and objectives identified in this Plan address land acquisition, leisure opportunities, recreation sites and facilities, operations and maintenance, safety and security, and financing and implementation.

### **3.1.3 LAND ACQUISITION**

Marietta faces a moderate deficit (29 acres) of parkland over the ten-year planning period and therefore the goal for land acquisition will focus on securing land via various methods at locations throughout the city that are suitable for parks. The goal for land acquisition is:

**The City of Marietta will endeavor to continue to provide a minimum of 6.25 acres of parkland for each 1,000 residents.**

To facilitate achievement of this goal, the following objectives are advanced:

- Advance acquisition of land suitable for development of parks will be a priority pending funding resources.
- New parks should be located in areas of higher population density where they can be utilized by adjacent neighborhoods.
- Parks should be located to minimize travel times where feasible.
- Seek opportunities for providing parkland through partnering agreements, e.g. schools-in-parks in conjunction with the Marietta City School System.

### **3.1.4 LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES**

Providing a wide range of recreational opportunities for community residents was mentioned during the input process and is a key to meeting demand. If new opportunities are provided in a manner that is commensurate with expansion of the recreation system, utilization of parks and facilities will increase. The goal for leisure opportunities is:





**The PRFD will endeavor to provide or facilitate new leisure opportunities not presently available to community residents.**

The following should be accomplished in order to attain this goal:

- The addition of new active and passive facilities as a part of park retrofits and new park development
- Adding programs not provided by other entities as system-wide expansion occurs
- Provide necessary professional PRFD staff to meet the demands of facilities and program offerings
- Improve the marketing programs to publicize the recreation system and programs
- Periodically holding public meetings throughout the community to secure input relative to the recreation system

### **3.1.5 RECREATION SITES AND FACILITIES**

The lack of availability of large parcels of land suitable for new parks will mean that the city will have to develop smaller parks and possibly retrofit existing parks to meet future demand. In addition, a wider range of facilities will need to be developed. The goal for recreation sites and facilities is:

**Existing parks and facilities will be upgraded and/or expanded to better serve community residents where appropriate.**

This goal can be attained through accomplishment of the following objectives:

- Improve the quality of support facilities where needed
- Determine the feasibility of retrofitting parks to include facilities that would receive higher utilization where possible
- Investigate the feasibility of developing a linear park system that would utilize rights-of-way and easements for trails, coupled with neighborhood park nodes to serve residential areas throughout the city
- Develop linkages consisting of multi-purpose trails, sidewalks and bikeways that would afford access to regional trails, units of the NPS and recreation systems of adjacent jurisdictions (Cobb County, Kennesaw and Smyrna)
- Encourage recreational land set asides as part of redevelopment projects as a means to secure additional parkland



- Assure that park facilities are ADA accessible
- Include walking/jogging trails in all new parks as feasible
- Complete a citywide Marietta trail system

### **3.1.6 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE**

A quality maintenance program is a key element that will allow for park and facilities longevity. Parks that do not receive adequate levels of maintenance quickly deteriorate and become costly to maintain. To promote a quality maintenance program within the Marietta recreation system, the following goal is established:

**The city should provide a level of system-wide maintenance that will enhance the life of parks and facilities and attract users.**

The following objectives are identified in conjunction with this goal:

- An adequate budget must be in place to accommodate additional maintenance staff and maintenance programs as the recreation system expands
- Assure that maintenance practices utilize sustainable measures
- Park maintenance supervisory personnel should receive annual training and obtain appropriate certifications within their areas of expertise
- A formal Maintenance Plan should be prepared and adopted to address maintenance practices

### **3.1.7 SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES**

All users of Marietta parks should be afforded adequate security as a means to enhance their recreation experience. Accordingly, the following goal is established:

**The PRFD will endeavor to provide adequate safe and comfortable parks.**

Goal achievement can be attained by accomplishing the following objectives:

- Provide for routine patrolling of all parks by Marietta law enforcement personnel
- Use citizen volunteer groups as park supervision assistants
- Provide security lighting proximate to activity centers, support facilities and potential crime locations as determined by staff



- Install security equipment in parks as needed

### **3.1.8 FINANCING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Improvements to the Marietta recreation system improvements are anticipated to be both extensive and costly as the PRFD seeks to meet acreage and facility deficits. The financing of improvements to existing parks and the development of new parks and facilities will require identification and implementation of multiple permanent funding sources. The goal for financing system-wide improvements is:

**To identify some funding sources and methods of funding recreation system improvements that can be implemented.**

This goal will be met by achieving the following objectives:

- Establish and maintain a capital improvements funding source throughout the planning period
- Establish and maintain a source of revenue for operations and maintenance
- Consider a public referendum for a parks bond issue as a potential funding vehicle (Voters approved in November 2009 a \$25 million bond to initiate park and recreation improvements as shown in Table 5.1.
- Implement several projects during the initial three years at parks throughout the city as a means to demonstrate the quality of facilities that are possible when funding sources are available
- Leverage local funds where possible with Federal and State grant programs such as the Land & Water Conservation Fund, the Recreational Trails Program and the Georgia Land Conservation Partnership
- Pursue grants from donors having a history of providing funds for community recreational improvements
- Establish a “Friends-Of-The-Parks” organization
- Enlist the aid of non-profit organizations as part of the implementation process
- Develop “partnerships” with businesses, schools and local universities that might have the ability to make significant contributions for land acquisition and/or facilities development





## **3.2 PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Plan recommendations focus on translating substantive suggestions received from the input process and the results of the needs assessment into strategic initiatives and realistic recommendations for land acquisition; improvements and retrofitting of existing parks; developing recommendations and program elements for new parks; partnering; and, for trails and linkages between elements of the city's recreation system.

In addition these recommendations will examine the city's parks operations and maintenance practices and will advance suggestions for the future needs of the PRFD.

### **3.2.1 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

To facilitate the successful implementation of Plan recommendations, strategic principles (initiatives) have been identified to guide the decision-making and capital project implementation process. These principles address specific elements of the Marietta recreation system, and constitute the basis for providing a wide range of recreation opportunities for community residents. Strategic planning is "planning aimed at producing results", and represents a realistic means by which the city can successfully accomplish the implementation process within the framework of the ten-year planning period. The following strategic principles form the basis for Plan recommendations:

- The principle of advance acquisition of land for parks, linear parks and open space is critical to the success of this Plan as parcels of significant size are difficult to identify, and land costs will increase substantially throughout the planning period
- Marietta parks and facilities improvements must have high visibility, be accessible to community residents, and serve population concentrations and potential growth areas of the city
- The development of linear parks containing neighborhood park "nodes" is advanced in the Plan recommendations as a means to afford neighborhood units accessibility to recreational opportunities, while at the same time affording connectivity between elements of the recreation system
- The retrofitting of existing parks and indoor facilities will offer the potential for providing facilities for which significant demand exists without having to acquire additional land
- Partnering with public and private schools, colleges, business and industry, quasi-public organizations, private recreation providers, and with the recreation departments of adjacent communities can be an effective means to meet recreational demand while providing additional land, parks and facilities

### **3.2.2 THE TEN-YEAR CITYWIDE PARKS AND FACILITIES MASTER PLAN**

The recommendations contained in this Plan span the ten-year period beginning in 2010, reflect the strategic initiatives and address land acquisition; improvements and retrofitting of existing



parks; the development of new parks and facilities; providing linear parks, trails and linkages; opportunities for partnering with other recreation providers and PRFD staffing needs.

### **3.2.3 LAND ACQUISITION**

Based on the population projections on page 3, the PRFD will have to add 29 acres by the year 2020 to maintain the ration of 6.25 acres per 1,000 population. While it is not certain if it can be achieved, the majority of this acreage should be in the form of a larger community park, supplemented by smaller neighborhood parks, linked in linear fashion. In this manner, city residential areas can be served by new neighborhood parks, with other residential concentrations being linked to existing parks by trails and greenways.

Historically, cities and counties normally do not seek acquisition of parkland until it becomes a pressing need. This typically results in the purchase of land at a higher cost, and possibly in unsuitable or inaccessible locations. The need to acquire parkland well in advance of development cannot be overemphasized. When a parcel of land of appropriate size, and in a suitable location becomes available through donation, or at a reasonable cost, the city should make the acquisition and hold the property for development as a recreation site - even if this results in the land being held for several years.

### **3.2.4 IMPROVEMENTS AND RETROFITTING OF EXISTING PARKS**

Marietta parks will be improved and/or retrofitted during the ten-year implementation period. These projects will result in the provision of expanded active and passive recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the city. Improvements and/or retrofitting of existing parks will be used to create a parks system that will address the city's facilities and program needs listed in the "*Marietta-specific*" Standards section of this plan. Improvements and/or retrofitting of existing parks will be used to create a parks system that will address the city's facilities and program needs listed in the "*Marietta-specific*" Standards section of this plan. Where feasible, facilities in these parks should be brought into compliance with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Furthermore, park properties should be addressed in a manner which will accomplish aesthetically pleasing and sustainable landscaping as well as address topographical issues.

### **3.2.5 NEW PARKLAND AND FACILITIES**

New parkland acquisition and facilities will be considered with a primary focus on providing land equally distributed throughout the city where possible. Some of the elements to be considered at the new parks may include:

- Large multi-purpose athletic fields conducive to soccer and football play
- Grassed playfield
- Dog park
- Multi-purpose courts
- Horseshoe pits



- A pavilion with picnic facilities
- Walking trails
- Restroom buildings
- Parking spaces
- Playgrounds
- Volleyball courts

### **3.2.6 INDOOR FACILITIES**

Based on table 2-4, there will be a need for two community centers by the year 2020. No new recreation centers will be necessary, provided the existing centers remain viable.

### **3.2.7 LINEAR PARKS, TRAILS AND LINKAGES**

The City of Marietta has in place a trail system that will afford connectivity between neighborhoods; activity centers; the downtown area; and, also external connections to the Cobb County trail system. Five segments of this system are either under development or in the planning stages. In addition, various studies (the Downtown Plan, LCI studies and the Powder Springs Road Corridor Study) advocate trail and greenway systems that will become an integral part of the city trail network.

The Plan recommendations build upon this system, proposing trails and linkages that will afford additional connectivity to, and between city parks and the recreational facilities of non-city providers. Portions of this system will result in a linear park network that will utilize existing parks as neighborhood-serving nodes. When completed, the citywide multi-purpose trail system will afford many city and county residents the opportunity to fulfill recreational needs without the need for extensive automobile travel.

#### **The Marietta Trail System**

The Marietta trail system is envisioned to consist of five segments: North; Intown; South; University; and Powder Springs. When completed, the trail system will radiate outward from the downtown, ultimately connecting to the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, the Chattahoochee River, the Silver Comet Trail, and to the Cobb County Trail System.

The highest priority segment is the portion of the Kennesaw Mountain to the Chattahoochee River Trail, which will traverse Kennesaw Road and Atlanta Street throughout the city. The northernmost and southernmost portions have been completed.

The University segment of the trail system will link the southern portion of the city to Southern Polytechnic State University, Life University and proceed east to the Rottenwood Creek Trail, and on to the CRNRA trail system.





The Powder Springs segment is an integral part of the Powder Springs Street corridor master plan. This trail segment will traverse the length of Powder Springs Street throughout the city and link to the University segment.

In order to facilitate completion of the citywide multi-purpose trail system, and to afford key linkages to other elements of the recreation system, these segments should be completed within the initial five years of the implementation program.

### **Linear Parks and Linkages**

The linear park concept is a means to afford recreational opportunities using easements, rights-of-way, floodplain and other narrow strips of property to connect to existing city parks - and greenspace and to facilitate development of small neighborhood park nodes to be located within higher density residential portions of the city. This will enable the PRFD to provide a network of smaller parks in a more cost-effective manner, with improved accessibility for maintenance operations.

To accomplish this concept, three additional linear trails are proposed for implementation during the ten-year planning period. The first extends the University segment of the Marietta Trail System to Wildwood Park and then follows the floodplain of Rottenwood Creek east as proposed in the Delk Road LCI Plan.

A second linear segment is proposed in the western portion of the city within the floodplain of Ward Creek. This would include the southern portion of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park and extend northeast to Polk Street. This could connect to the Kennesaw Mountain to the Chattahoochee River Trail via a link along Whitlock Avenue.

The third linear park would follow the floodplain of Sope Creek from Custer Park east to Merritt Park. This system would link to the Kennesaw Mountain to the Chattahoochee River Trail via a link along Montgomery Street and Birney Street.

Together with the Marietta Trail System, these linear park or trail systems could easily link to several existing city parks; facilitate creation of new neighborhood parks as part of redevelopment projects while also allowing some of the city's greenspace parcels to be utilized. The following linkages could readily be accomplished:

- North Segment – Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park and Lewis Park
- Intown Segment – Glover Park and Brown Park
- South Segment – Silver Comet Trail and the Chattahoochee River
- University Segment – Civic Center, Perry Parham Park, Softball/Baseball Complex, Southern Polytechnic State University, Life University and Wildwood Park
- Powder Springs Segment – Hickory Hills Park, West Dixie Park and Gramling Park



- Ward Creek Linear Park – Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, the new west Marietta park, A. L. Burruss School, Laurel Park, West Side School, Marietta Middle School, Polk Street Greenspace and Walthal Greenspace
- Rottenwood Creek Linear Park – Burruss Nature Park, Franklin Road Greenspace and Rottenwood Trail
- Sope Creek Linear Park – Elizabeth Porter Center, Birney Street Park, Custer Park, Merritt Road Greenspace, Lockheed School and Merritt Park

### **3.2.8 PARTNERING**

Although many opportunities for partnering are present, this Plan will emphasize those that have the greatest potential to create new parks and trails during the implementation period. The most productive partnering opportunities are those that would involve the development of neighborhood parks, the implementation of the Marietta Trail System, and the development of the linear park system. Partners that could have the greatest impact would be the development community, city schools, and area universities.

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION**

The recommendations presented in this Plan translate the “Marietta – specific” standards for system-wide acreage and facilities into recommendations for land acquisition; improvements/retrofitting of existing parks; for the development of new parks; for linear parks, trails and linkages and for indoor facilities.

## **5.0 CURRENT FINANCING**

In November, 2009, the voters approved a Parks and Recreation Bond issue in the amount of \$25,000,000. The proceeds from this bond will be used to fund land acquisition, improvements to existing parks and facilities, development of existing parks, trails, facilities and greenspace (new or existing), and planning/design/administration/contingencies as outlined below in Table 5-1, which was submitted to the voters by the City Council with the authorizing language for the bond referendum.



Table 5-1 2009 Parks Bond

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT		PROJECTED COST
<b>LAND ACQUISITION</b>		
	Sub-Total.....	\$5,000,000
<b>IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES</b>		
	Aviation Sports Complex.....	\$100,000
	Birney Street Park.....	\$100,000
	Brown Park .....	\$750,000
	Burruss Nature Park .....	\$250,000
	Custer Park .....	\$500,000
	Elizabeth Porter Recreation Center .....	\$3,750,000
	Flournoy Park.....	\$30,000
	Glover Park .....	\$175,000
	Gramling Street Park .....	\$40,000
	Hickory Hills Park.....	\$1,750,000
	Hill Park.....	\$5,000
	Lake Park.....	\$40,000
	Laurel Park.....	\$1,200,000
	Lawrence Street Community Center.....	\$1,100,000
	Lewis Park.....	\$225,000
	Merritt Park.....	\$250,000
	Victory Park.....	\$200,000
	West Dixie Park.....	\$60,000
	Whitaker Park.....	\$170,000
	Wildwood Park .....	\$300,000
	Woods Park.....	\$5,000
	Sub-Total .....	\$11,000,000
<b>DEVELOPMENT OF PARKS, FACILITIES, TRAILS AND GREENSPACE (new and existing)</b>		
	Sub-Total.....	\$5,000,000
<b>PLANNING/DESIGN/ADMINISTRATION/CONTINGENCIES</b>		
	Sub-Total.....	\$4,000,000
	<b>TOTAL BOND COSTS.....</b>	<b>\$25,000,000**</b>

\*\* The allocations of funds for project components are estimates and may vary as planning, engineering, site improvements, etc... progress. Surpluses from over-estimated projects, including interest received on bond funds of such projects, shall be used first to complete under-estimated projects and all remaining funds received from interest and over-estimated projects shall be used for other projects or improvements which the City Council may deem necessary and which are encompassed within the language of the statement of purpose in the election notice.